

THE

483

# CASE

*12. 179*

Of the PEOPLE Called

# QUAKERS

(ONCE MORE)

Stated, and Published to the World:

WITH THE

Accusations Charged upon them; and their Answers

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L O N D O N,

Printed for *Robert Wilson.*

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OF the PEOPLE Called

## QUAKERS

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Stated, and Published to the World;

WITH THE

Reasons Charged upon them; and their Answer

LONDON

Printed for Robert Wilson

The Case of the People (called Quakers once more) Stated, and Published to the World, &c.

**W**E are an Afflicted and Suffering People in these Kingdoms at this Day. Mocked, Reproached, haled before Magistrates, violently Abused, and Imprisoned, and much Hard dealing exercised upon us: This is apparently visible to all People, and needs no further proof.

But, whether these Afflictions, and Sufferings, Imprisonments, and Hard Dealing, be Just, or Unjust, according to our Deserts, or out of the malice and enmity of our Adversaries, This is the Question to be enquired into; Unjust, and Unrighteous, and out of Malice and Enmity, and not of due Desert (say We) are these Sufferings imposed on Us: But Justly, and according to Desert, and the Laws of the Land (say our Adversaries.) Who shall be Judge in the Case between Us? Even, the Law of God, the Gospel of Christ, the Scriptures of Truth, the Example of Primitive Christians, our Neighbours, and the Witness in every Mans Conscience. And to the Judgement of all These we Appeal, and shall abide their Sentence.

*First,* We are Accused of an Hainous Crime, and as if We deserved the Greatest punishments, Because we are Discontenting, and Differing from the Church of England, and cannot Conform to all Her Worshipps, and Ceremonies, therefore are We said to be Hereticks; Because holding, and practising Differing things from Her, &c.

*Plea.* The Scriptures of Truth (which are according to both Law and Gospel) do Say, and Judge, That they who sometimes did Discent, and Differ from some of the Church of Christ, in some Principles, and Practices, and could not practice in all things, what some others did, as in Rom. 14.

where it is signified, That some of the Church of *Christ* believed they might eat *All things*; some others of the Church did eat *Herbs*, some esteemed *One day above Another*, some esteemed *Every day Alike*; this kind of *discenting*, and *difference*, about *Meats*, and *Days*, and *Ceremonies*, were amongst the Members of the True Church; but *What is the Judgement of Scripture in this case of Difference amongst them?* Not that the *Discenters* one from another should be *Punished*, and *Imprisoned*, and *Banished*; but ver. 5. *Let every man be persuaded in his own mind.* And *One* was not so much as to *Judge* another in this case of *Difference*, and *Discenting*; much less to *Imprison* one another for that Cause. And in *Phil. 3. 15.* it is there signified, That if any persons were *discenting*, and *different* in *Judgement*, or in the growth in *Grace*, from the rest of the Church, every one was to walk in that measure of *Truth*, as he had attained to; And if any were otherwise minded, (viz. Different in the Growth in the Grace of God) then God should reveal the same unto them; And notwithstanding their difference in *Judgement*, whether in cases *Substantial*, or *Ceremonial*, yet, they were still to be in *Love* and *Unity*, and walk in their measures, to which they had attained, and they were not to be *imprisoned* and *persecuted*, as we are at this day. Hence, observe, That the *Judgement of Scriptures*, which the *Law of God*, and *Gospel of Christ* are according to, is clear for us, and against them that hate us, that *imprison* us, and *afflict* us, for *discenting* and *disferring* in some *Doctrines*, and *Practices*, from the Church of England. But

*Secondly*, If we were indeed *Hereticks*, and *Erroneous* people, suppose so, which never yet was truly proved of us, nor can be: What *Judgement* do the *Scriptures* (which are according to the *Law of God*, and *Gospel of Christ*) give in that case? Not that we should be thus *imprisoned*, and *afflicted*, with corporal punishments; but according to *Titus, Tit. 3. 10, 11.* we should first be *Admonished in love*, and *Exhorted once and again*, and then, if we *gain-say*, and will not bear *Reproof*, to be *Rejected*, *cast Out*, and *Denied* of the *Assembly of Saints*; But not *imprisoned*, and *banished*; and according to *1 Cor. 5.* where it is signified, That some, in the denomination of the Church, did

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against Christ and the Church, and were Hereticks, and  
 Discenters, because of their Evil deeds, from the True Church;  
 yet these were not to be imprisoned, and persecuted in their  
 persons; but delivered unto Satan for the destruction of the Flesh,  
 that the Spirit might be saved in the Day of the Lord; they  
 were to be Spiritually dealt withal; and they were to be  
 cast out into the Wicked world, among the Ungodly, to have  
 their portion from God, with the Wicked, to be delivered to  
 Satan for the destruction of the Flesh, that it might be destroyed,  
 and the Spirit saved in the Day of the Lord. So, if we were  
 indeed such, as these were, Discenters, and in difference from  
 the True Church, because of some Wickedness, yet the Judge-  
 ment of Scriptures is against our Enemies in this Case, who  
 persecute, and imprison us; for thus it ought not to be done  
 unto us, if the Church of England were the very True Church  
 of Christ, and We in difference from Her, by False principles,  
 or Evil conversation, or any thing else. Thus you see the  
 Judgement of the Scriptures, and of the Law of God, and Gospel  
 of Christ, is against our persecutors.

Thirdly, But suppose We doubt, That the Church of Eng-  
 land, and its Ordinances, Discipline, its Worship and Ceremo-  
 nies, be not according to the Scriptures of Truth, but are ra-  
 ther in the form of Godliness, without the power: suppose we,  
 in Conscience believe this, and think we can prove it, which  
 is the very truth of the Case, and therefore do deny Confor-  
 mity to Her, lest we should sinne against God, and wrong our  
 Consciences, at least, as we believe. What Judgement  
 doth the Law of God, and Gospel of Christ, give, in this Case?  
 We are exhorted, and commanded in Scriptures, 2 Tim. 3.  
 From covetous men, and proud men, lovers of themselves, false  
 accusers, despisers of them that are good, high-minded men, and  
 lovers of pleasures, they that have the Form of Godliness, but  
 not the Power, from all such we are to turn away. And there-  
 fore we believe we are Justified by the Scriptures, in turn-  
 ing away for these divers Years past, (and till we be otherwise  
 persuaded by sound Doctrine) from the Ministry and  
 Churches that are in England, or lately have been, (and  
 sound Reason hath not been yet shewed us, to the contrary,

by you) because they are such, as the Scriptures Exhorts us to turn away from; and because we have judged, that they have not the form of godliness, but not the power, so we are not to be imprisoned, and persecuted, though we differ, and dissent, and turn away from all them that are Covetous, Proud, Boasters, lovers of themselves, despisers of them that are good, high-minded men, and such as have a form of godliness, but not the power. But we are Judged Just, and our Cause not condemned by the Law of God, and Gospel of Christ, and by the holy Scripture; but rather such as inflict Sufferings upon us: And for any of our Principles and Doctrines that we hold, we deserve no punishment nor Persecution, because hereof; for we testify before God, Angels and Men, That we hold and maintain, no Principles of Religion, nor Practice of Worship, nor Doctrines of Gospel, but what are according to Scriptures of Truth. And we are ready to be tryed, and proved in that case, and to bring the matter to Issue, in faire proceeding with any man, that shall object the contrary; And thus the Judgment of Scriptures are for us, as we suppose (at least) and if we are in Errour, either by denying any thing on the one hand, or affirming any thing on the other, we have not been hitherto, well proceeded against, in order to our Conviction.

Secondly, We are accused as for a great Crime, and Imprisoned, because we meet together, in the Name and Power of Jesus Christ, to wait upon him, and to worship him in Spirit and Truth; in Prayer to God, and Exhortations one to another, in Righteousness and Holiness: But, what Judgment doth the Law and Gospel, and holy Scriptures give, and our Neighbours also, between Us in this Case? Lets come all to the Bar, and receive just Sentence.

Plea. First, The Judgment of God's Law, Christ's Gospel and holy Scriptures, are not against our meeting together, but on the contrary, do command us, and exhort us, with promises of blessings, to meet together in the worship of God, and to wait upon him; And it was the practice of the primitive Christians, to assemble themselves together, in that form and manner as we do on this day, (to wit) in a private manner, and separate from the

and all the *Jews Synagogues*, as in *Acts* 1. 17. The *Saints* and *Disciples*, both *Men* and *Women*, to the number of one hundred and twenty, (which were far more than ten) went into an upper Chamber, being a private place, and no publick Synagogue, and there waited upon the Lord in *Prayer* and *Supplication*, according as we do at this day: Thus the Scriptures justify the way and manner of our Meetings, and condemn them not. Again, in *Acts* 20. 8. the *Saints* and *Disciples* were gathered together in an upper Chamber, and Paul Preached unto them untill mid-night: Here was a private Meeting, far above the number of five, and out of any publick Synagogues; and Christ Jesus said, Where two or three are met together in my Name, there I am, in the midst of them. And He and his *Disciples*, often met together in private places, apart from the *Jews publick Worship*s, sometimes in a Ship, and sometimes in *Deserts*, and on the *Mountains*, and in particular Houses, and Preached, and Prayed; this the Scriptures prove. And also, in *Heb.* 10. 25. we are expressly commanded, not to neglect the *Assembling* of our selves together, but to exhort one another, and so much the more as the day approacheth. By all which Scriptures, with many more that might be quoted, it is Evident to all the world, That our meeting together for the worship of God, in that form and manner as practised by us, is according to the Law of God, the Gospel of Christ Jesus, and the holy Scriptures: And all these, give Judgment for us, and justify us, and therefore consequently condemn such as do violence to us, for this practise of meeting together, for the worship of God.

And thus, though we are Accused and Imprisoned as Evil doers, yet, such our practise of meeting is manifestly according to the Law of God, Gospel of Christ, Scriptures, Example of *Apostles*, and *Presidents* of primitive Christians; all which give Judgment for us.

Secondly, What Judgment do our Neighbours give in this Case? they say, concerning our Meetings, That they have known us to meet together in such manner, for diverse years, in our Towns and Villages, and never knew, nor understood of any harm or danger herein, nor ever were any way prejudiced, either

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in their Persons or Estates, by our Meetings. || The very will of God in all our Neighbours, doth Testify, and give Judgment, that our Meetings have alwayes been peaceable and quiet, that we came together in peace and good order, and in the same, and no person hath been harmed by our Meetings: enquire of the Neighbourhood, and they will tell you, they believe in their Consciences, our Meetings are good, and have good effects, and are not evil, nor bring any evil to any.

And as for the manner of our Meeting and sitting together, 'tis orderly and decently, and of good report among men, and for any Doctrine that ever was there held, or heard by any, none can truly accuse it, to be either Error, or Heresy, or Sedition; but on the contrary, they know it witnesseth against all Sin and Iniquity, and tends to the turning of people from Ungodliness and Unrighteousness, to Truth and Holiness: And many can tell, this is effected, by our Doctrine Preached in our Meetings; and our Neighbours can witness, that we part again in peace, and good order, and in convenient time, and they can shew you, they are not terrified, nor the Peace of the Land disturbed (on our part) by our Meetings, which are in God's fear, and to the Glory of his Name, which all sober men know, are according to the Law of God, and Gospel, and primitive Christians Example. And thus our Neighbours give Judgment for us, and in their Consciences, do not find them that Imprison us. For this matter of meeting together, which Gods Law, Gospel, Scriptures, and our Neighbours do thus clearly Justify.

Thirdly. We are accused, as guilty of a heinous Crime, and Imprisoned, because we refuse to swear at all, or take an Oath in any case. *First, The Judgment of the Law of the New Testament of God, and Gospel of Christ, and Scriptures in this case is clear on our behalf.* As in the express command of Christ in his Law and Scriptures Recorded, Mat. 5. where he saith, Swear not at all, by Heaven, nor Earth, nor by Jerusalem, nor by the Head; but, let your yea, be yea, and your nay, be nay; whatsoever is more comes of Evil. And again, Jam. 5. the



...in the same words, *Alms all*  
*swearing*. Thus you see, the Judgment of Christ  
 of the Gospel, and of the Apostle, and of Scriptures;  
 from *Condemning* of us to *Imprisonment* & *Banishment*,  
 for *refusing* to *Swear*; that we are *Commanded* and *Ex-*  
*horted* by them, *not* to *Swear* at all; and therefore *con-*  
*demned* by us in our *refusing* to *Swear*; and thus, give  
 judgment for such, as do *Imprison* and *Persecute* us for not  
 swearing. Come to the Judgment of Christ, his Gospel, and his  
 Apostles; Let you and us appear together before their  
 Judgment Seat; whether they give Judgment against us, that  
 we are *swearing*, or against you, that *Imprison* us for that  
 cause. And let the Lord God, Angels and just Men, give their  
 Judgment in this Case; we a poor afflicted people, do appeal  
 to you, for just Sentence of Judgment, between us and our  
 opponents.

Finally, Let our Neighbours give their Judgment, though  
 we do refuse to take any Oath, because of the Commands of  
 Christ and his Gospel, as aforesaid; yet, what harm hath this  
 ever been to any of our Neighbours, let them speak; or  
 what detriment ought this to be to any of them, they will tell  
 you. Though we cannot formally take an Oath, yet we are ready  
 sometimes to do the Truth, and to speak it on all good occasions, as  
 when we swear upon a Book; and they can trust us upon  
 as much, or not more, than they can do any that swear  
 the Oath. And therefore they shall give judgment, that  
 according to their best knowledge, we ought not to be *Imprisoned*  
 or *Banished*, though we cannot swear formally upon a Book,  
 because the Truth is not suppressed, nor yet the administration  
 of Justice ought to be obstructed for our refusing to swear.  
 And the Neighbourhood bears witness for us, and against  
 us, as well hardly by us, and *Persecute* us because here-  
 tofore, we are reputed as *heinous Offenders*, and *Im-*  
*prisoned* because so supposed, we are not so as we are  
 by the Laws of the Land, but *break* them, and will not conform to

the Church, pay Tribute, take Oath, leave nothing more, though we know the Law of the Land commands us to do so. Plea. First, as to the submitting to all known Lawes of Land: This is known to God and our Neighbours, as a Principle and Practice is, and ever hath been, to submit to every Government, and to all Lawes of men, either by or by suffering; as at this day, we suffer our the greatest afflictions and Tribulations, that can be imposed on us; it is well known to our Neighbours and all people, that we are submissive to all Lawes of men, by patient suffering with assistance, even when any Law requires any thing of us, which we cannot perform for Conscience sake, that Law we will patient suffering, resisting no man, nor rendering evil for evil to any. And the Judgment of the Scriptures, which are according to both Law and Gospel, and the presidents of Saints justify us in this Case, in teaching patiently to suffer the great penalties of the Law, rather than to obey by doing any thing Law, as requires things contrary to our pure Consciences; as in the Example of the three children, Dan. 3. who were commanded to fall down and worship the Golden Image, at what soever they heard the sound of the Musick, when the penalty of being cast into the midst of the burning fire Furnace; which Commandment they could not obey, nor could Truth fall down to worship the Image. But rather choosed to suffer the penalty of being cast into the midst of the burning fire Furnace, which accordingly was done unto them; again, in the case of Daniel, chap. 6. who was commanded to make no Petition to any Prince or man for thirty dayes, save to King Darius, upon the penalty of affliction of being cast into the Lyons Den; But Daniel did not chuse to suffer the penalty, to be cast into the Den of Lyons, but to obey the Commandment, and was cast into the Den. By these examples of holy men, with many more that may be given, out of the Scriptures it is evident, that right men will rather chuse to suffer, than to obey any Law of men contrary to their Consciences. So, the Law of God, and Example of Saints and holy Scriptures, give Judgment for us in this case, rather chooseth to Suffer, than to obey Lawes contrary to our Consciences; and consequently must needs condemn us, if we

and Imprison us, because they require obedience  
things against our Consciences.

Though we do disobey *Laws*, and cannot actively  
any Law of man, when it requireth and commandeth  
contrary to a good Conscience; yet herein also we are  
by the Law of God, Example of Saints and holy Scrip-  
tures, and they give Judgment for us, and consequently against  
us in this case; and in particular in the two examples  
before-mentioned in Daniel; the three children were expressly  
commanded to fall down and worship the golden Image; and  
Daniel was also required by the Kings decree, not to pray to  
any God or man, save to King Darius; yet all these holy men  
of God, did absolutely disobey the Law and Decree, to requir-  
ing of them, and did contrary to the commandment: for the  
three children did not bow, nor Daniel cease to pray to his God,  
but prayed as at other times, and yet were justified of God in  
doing. Also, the Apostles of our Lord Jesus Christ, *Act. 4.*  
were commanded to preach no more in the name of Jesus,  
but the Apostles did disobey their commandment, and went on  
and Preached in the Spirit and Power of Christ, contrary to  
the commandment of the Rulers, and appealed to them, whe-  
ther it were not better to obey God than man? Many Examples  
we might collect out of the Scriptures, that the servants of  
God did disobey the commands of Kings and Rulers, and could  
obey (by doing) any command contrary to God, but ra-  
ther choosed to suffer afflictions, and death it self, than to o-  
bey such *Laws* and Decrees, as required any thing contrary  
to pure Conscience; and this is our case at this day, we can-  
not obey (by doing) any thing against our Consciences, but must  
break the *Laws* of men, and disobey their commandments, ra-  
ther than break the Law of God, and sin against our own Con-  
sciences, whatsoever we suffer because hereof; and yet the ex-  
amples of Saints, and Scriptures, Justify us in this behalf.

And let all our enemies cease to cry out Rebellion and Dis-  
obedience to *Laws* and Government; for we are not such as  
willfully and obstinately disobey any *Laws* of men, but for  
Conscience sake, and that we may not sin against God, nor  
dishonour his Word in us; Therefore we cannot obey *Laws* con-

trary to our Conscience, whatsoever we suffer; which  
 fit not, nor rebel against any in this case: So that  
 Principles and Practices, are to obey every Law and Com-  
 mand, either by *doing* or *suffering*. And though we dis-  
 obey Lawes as are not according to the Law of God, and  
 choose to Suffer; yet, herein we are justified by the  
 God, and the holy Scriptures.

Thirdly, And as for our Conversations among men, in respect of our daily walking and converse with them in dealing, in respect of honesty, and faithfulness, any true and justness in works and words; our Neighbours that witness for us: We will not justify our selves, tis God that justifies us, and the Law of God, Gospel of Christ, Scriptures, Examples of holy men, our Neighbours, and the witness of God in all mens Consciences, shall bear witness for us. And all these do give judgment for us in these cases, to whom we do appeal for Judgment. And, O Lord God Everlasting, do thou Judge our Cause, do thou make it manifest in thy due Season to all the world, that we are thy people, that we love Thee above all, that we fear thy Name more than all, that we love Righteousness and hate Iniquity; and that we now suffer for thy holy Name, and Truth, and for thy Honour and Justice, and for thy Truth and Holiness. O Lord, thou knowest we are ready to perish, rather than to loose one grain thereof. Amen, Amen.

Our Accusations and Answers, truly compared, and weighed in the ballance of Justice, and truth in every mans Conscience, Let all the world Judge of the Cause, Do we desire to be Ruined, Destroyed, Imprisoned, and Banished, and to be devoured of *Wild Beasts*, as our enemy threatens we will do? Is it so, Are we *Hereticks*? are we *Seditious*? are we *Drunkards*? are we *double dealers*? are we such as the *Law of God* condemns? what *evil* have we done in the Land? do we hurt any body? are we not *Innocent* before the Lord and *Men*? we appeal to the just witness of God in all; let it be answered, & that no man will hear, and consider our cause this day, yet the Lord will plead our Cause in his time and season, and let the world to know we are his people; in the mean time, we are willing to suffer the Reproaches of ungodly men, till the Lord work deliverance in the earth.

now it may be Objected by the Magistrates and Rulers, That we have now a Law against you, and you must Suffer; we cannot but put the Law in Execution, according to our Oaths and Offices: and it is not we that Persecute you, but it is the Law of the Land by which you now suffer, and we cannot be blamed for your suffering, we only execute the Law. And after this manner is the Reasoning of some at this day, &c.

Ans. To all which I do Answer: It is true, there is a Law now Enacted against us, which is pretendedly made the ground of our suffering; but whether that Law be in it self just, or unjust, I shall not now demonstrate, but shall leave it to the Judgement of all Christian men that know us, our Principles, Doctrines, Ways, and Conversations, and let them judge whether we deserve the Penalties and Punishments therein described, for any Principle, or Practice held and maintained by us. And though there be a Law against us, yet the Magistrates that are Executors thereof, may execute the same with Moderation, or with Violence; with Discretion, or too much rigour; and it will be well for them to use moderation and discretion in this case: Hereby may they save themselves from that weight of Anger, and Indignation of the Lord God, that will come upon all Violent Doers, who seek to destroy the Innocent, and rejoyce in the occasion Administred. And though This Law be Enacted against our Meetings; not ours, I may say, but such Meetings as are Dangerous to the Publick Peace, and to the Terror of the People: But our Meetings are not such, and therefore This Law may not Justly extend in its Execution to the Breaching of our Meetings, nor to Banish us because of our Meeting together, which is for the Worship of God, and are Peaceable, and of Good Report among good men; and are not for Disturbance of the Peace, nor Terror of the People, and therefore justly free from this Law as aforesaid.

And though This Law is pretended against us for to Banish us, and to ridd the Land of us, as some vainly suppose. Yet must it needs be Executed to the height of it, without Moderation, or Restriction: Must this Law be Executed to the height, more than some other Laws, that are as truly En-

acted, and as fully in force as this Act can be. Yet some Lawes there are, which better deserves Execution than this, yet they lie Dormant, as is visibly apparent at this day, as 4 Jac. cap. 5. in these words: *Be it Enacted, &c. That all, and every person or persons, which after Forty dayes next following the end of this present Session of Parliament, shall be Drunk, and the same Offence of Drunkeness, shall be lawfully Convicted, shall for every such offence, Forfeit, and loose five Shillings, &c. to be paid to the hands of the Church-Wardens of that Parish where the Offence shall be committed, who shall be accountable therefore to the use of the Poor of the same Parish. And if the said person, or persons so Convicted, shall refuse, or neglect to pay the said Forfeiture, then the same shall be levied of the Goods of every such person, or persons, by Warrant of Precept from the Court, or Justices, before whom the same Conviction shall be: And if the Offender be not able to pay the sum of Five Shillings, then he shall be committed to the Stocks for the space of Six Hours.* Now you read the Statute at large, tis worth a sober mans pa- read over, and then Judge whether that Law be duly Ex- at this day, and also, whether it deserves not more Ex- cution than the present Act against us. Also the 1 Jac. in these words: *That all persons calling themselves Sch going about Begging; All Idle persons going about in any C either Begging, or using any Subtle Craft, or unlawful Gam Plaves; or feigning themselves to have knowledge in ogomy, or pretending that they can tell Fortunes, or other like phantastical Imaginations; All Fencers, Bear Common-players of Interludes, & Minstrels, wandring abroa be taken, adjudged, and deemed as Rogues, Vagabonds, and Beggars, and shall suffer such pains and punishments as is sed, 39 Eliz. cap. 4. (viz.) That every such person shall be Naked from the middle Upwards, and shall be openly W until his, or her Body be bloody, &c. and shall be forth- from parish to parish, &c.* And read the Statute at large, then consider how duly it is Executed now, and whe deserves not Execution, as much as the late Act ag though in some places, the one is more Executed th other; where many of our friends, being honest sob

and of good *Conversation*, and yet are haled out of their *Meetings*, where they are met only to worship God, and for no other end, and sent to Prison, and persecuted to the very height of the said *Act*; when as *idle persons*, following *unlawful Games*, and *Playes*, and *Bearwards*, *common players of Interludes*, and *Mintirells* of diverse kinds, do wander up and down *City* and *Country*, and having their *Play-houses* publick, where their wickedness is acted; such persons, and such things, though appearing publickly, yet are permitted, and little or no notice taken of them by some of the *Magistrates*, so as to punish them for breach of the *Lawes*, for the preventing of these Evils; but such wickedness is too much suffered, though there be diverse *Acts of Parliaments* against such persons and such *actions*, as well as there is one against our *Meetings*, yet, the *Act* against us, is more put in *Execution* in some places for the breaking of our *Meetings*, which are for the *Worship* of God, than the good *Lawes* for suppressing wickedness, though there is better *Law* for the one, than for the other; diverse other *Lawes* and *Statutes* made for good ends, for the suppressing of wickedness in the Land there are, which are but easily Executed at this day; but here is one *Act* against peaceable meeting together for the worship of God, which is violently Prosecuted and Executed upon *Innocent men*: and let all just men judge of these things, though there be a *Law* Enacted against our *Meetings*, so there is against *Drunkards* and *drunkenness*, and *unseasonable tipling* in *Taverns* and *Ale-houses*, and against *Mintirells*, *Fidlers*, *Pipers* and *Players*, *Common-Players* and *Stage-Players*, that go up and down the *Countries*, and have their *Play-houses* in publick *Cities*, which *Statutes* ought to be rather Executed, though they are not: but these things we shall leave to all sober people to judge of.

And seeing that The *Law* against Us is more put in *Execution*, than these other *Lawes*, it doth appear that there is more envy against us, and our peaceable *Religious Meetings*, than there is against *Prophaneness* and *Wickedness*, *Drunkenness*, and *Stage-Playing*, and such like; and such *Magistrates*, wheresoever they are, are not excusable in the sight of God; though there is a *Law* against us, while they Prosecute it against



gainst us, and not these other good Lawes against pro-  
 ungodly persons and practises; and therefore seeing we  
 see, we must say, It is not only because there is a Law  
 us, but it is also, or rather because, there is enmity, and  
 and wickedness in the hearts of men against us, which  
 main cause of our Sufferings at this day; and let the  
 strates compare this Law made against us, with that  
 in Doctor and Student, cap. 2. speaking concerning  
 written in the Heart, teaching every man what is to be  
 and what is to be fled: And (saith he) Because it is  
 in the heart, therefore it may not be put away, nor is  
 changeable by any diversity of place, or time; And therefore  
 this Law, Prescription, Statute, nor Custom may not prevail  
 if any be brought in against it, they be not Prescription  
 tutes, nor Customs, but things void, and against Justice,  
 other Lawes; as well the Lawes of God, as the Acts of Men  
 to be grounded upon the Law written in the Heart. And  
 of the same it said; Every mans Law must be consonant  
 Law of God, and therefore the Lawes of Princes, the Com-  
 ments of Prelates, the Statutes of Commonalties, nor yet  
 ordinances of the Church are not Righteous, nor Obligatory,  
 if it is consonant to the Law of God. And we are sure the  
 God and holy Scriptures do justifie our Meeting together, and  
 is expelled. Also in the Statute 28 Hen. 8. chap 7. it  
 in these words, That no man, of what Estate, Degree, or  
 tion soever he be, hath power to dispence with Gods Lawes, as  
 Clergy of this Realm, and the most part of all the  
 fines of Christendom. And we also Affirm, and think  
 things truly compared one with another, We leave the  
 the Judgement of the Law of God, Gospel of Christ,  
 Scriptures, and our Neighbours; and let Truth determine  
 So be it.

By P.  
 The End.